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FOR NEA/IR AND EUR/NCE

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TAGS: [IAEA](#) [MNUC](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [IR](#) [SI](#)

SUBJECT: US UNVIE AMBASSADOR SCHULTE ENGAGES SLOVENES ON  
IRAN, NUCLEAR FUEL

Classified By: CDA Maryruth Coleman for reasons 1.4 (b,d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: On January 16 - 17, U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna Ambassador Gregory Schulte visited Slovenia to engage the GOS and the media regarding U.S. positions and policy on nuclear weapons proliferation, focusing on Iran. The Ambassador also gave a well-attended speech to the Society for International Relations about the challenges of nuclear proliferation. His interviews with Slovene print and television media and a Serbian print daily were positively received and initial reports accurately presented U.S. views. END SUMMARY

¶2. (C) On January 16, Ambassador Schulte met with MFA State Secretary Matjaz Sinkovec to discuss U.S. - EU cooperation

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during Slovenia's term as EU president from January to June, 2008, especially in relation to joint efforts to confront Iran's nuclear program. Ambassador Schulte highlighted three key conclusions from the recently released National Intelligence Estimate on Iran's nuclear program: that it is clear that Iran had a nuclear weapons program up until 2003; that Iran could restart its nuclear weapons program at any time; and that Iran continues with its enrichment activities.

He also discussed three policy implications of the NIE: that Iran needs to admit to its past nuclear weapons program; that Iran needs to provide the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) with complete information and access regarding its nuclear program to ensure that Iran does not restart its nuclear weapons program; and that Iran still needs to suspend its enrichment activities. Ambassador Schulte also briefed the State Secretary on U.S. efforts to establish reliable sources of nuclear fuel, possibly through the IAEA, in order to remove any incentive for countries to enrich nuclear fuel for use in civilian nuclear programs. Sinkovec admitted that he was not well versed on the issues, but appreciated Ambassador Schulte's briefing and assured him that he would encourage the MFA's Security Policy Division to engage fully on Iran and other nuclear proliferation issues. Sinkovec also asked about the U.S. - India Civilian Nuclear Agreement and Ambassador Schulte briefed him on our position.

¶3. (C) Ambassador Schulte also met with officials from the MFA's Division for Asia, Africa, and the Pacific, to relay the same message and to discuss insights the Slovene officials might have on Iran, based upon their diplomatic service in Tehran. Division Director Tomaz Mencin and Desk Director Miljan Majhen, each of whom has served as Charge d'Affaires in Tehran, stressed that a united international position is critical to successfully pressure Iran to abandon

its nuclear weapons ambitions. They noted that any position that does not include key players such as Russia and China will allow Tehran to frame the controversy as "Iran vs. the West" rather than "Iran vs. the World." Majhen noted that the Iranians are excellent negotiators and have run a successful propaganda campaign in Iran that has convinced most Iranians that their country has as much a right to nuclear power and weapons as India or Pakistan. Mencin warned that tough action in the Security Council prior to Iranian elections in March could unite the Iranian public behind its leadership. He also speculated that Iran and Syria are buying time because they expect that the U.S. will need them in other arenas such as Iraq, putting them in a better negotiating position somewhere down the road.

14. (U) Ambassador Schulte delivered a speech entitled "Confronting the Challenge of Nuclear Proliferation" to the Society for International Relations on January 16. The event was well attended by GOS officials, the diplomatic community, think tanks, and the press. Ambassador Schulte also conducted interviews with print daily Dnevnik, POP TV, and the Serbian print daily Politika.

COLEMAN